



REMEMBERING COL. PIER

By PC-in-C Steve Michaels

The following was originally published in the August 2001 Camp Orders as one in a series of articles on the life of our Camp namesake.

In July 1861, Pvt. Colwert Pier and the 1st Wisconsin Infantry (3 mos.) were part of the 20,000 volunteer force, commanded by Gen. Robert Patterson. After its action at Falling Waters, it was to take Harpers Ferry at the northern end of the Shenandoah River and then move south, keeping Confederate General Johnson fully engaged and if possible, drive him away from the Manassas Gap line.

On July 8th, Johnston's men, numbering 6500, simply marched silently away from the hopelessly timid and inept Patterson, moving first to Winchester, then turning eastward toward Blue Ridge.

Having arrived at Charleston, Virginia, the day before, Pier knew that Federal Troops were to attack soon upon Winchester, Manassas Junction, and three other places. He wrote, "...for some reason we did not go towards Winchester, but started off at a right angle towards Charleston ...What our object is in coming here I cannot tell; it is said to cut off the retreat of the enemy from Manassas Gap and Winchester..."

General Patterson had abandoned the attempt to hold Johnston in check and thus, the rebels were able to reinforce Beauregard on the battlefield of Bull Run on July 21st.

Pier wrote, "The news of the fight at Manassas Junction created much deep feeling with the boys. I think many will go home, take a little rest, and then come back with the regiment."

But for chance and better leadership, Pier and his fellow Wisconsin volunteers might have been part of a Union victory at Manassas.

*Sources: Fond du Lac Saturday Reporter, Trenloc Letter XIII, 27 July 1861 and Trenloc Letter XIV, 3 August 1861.
The Battlefields of the Civil War by William C. Davis.*

- Upcoming events at the Kenosha Civil War Museum -

Exploring the Lady Elgin

Friday, December 9, 2011

Noon - 1 p.m.; Civil War Museum's Freedom Hall

The *Lady Elgin* pre-Civil War maritime disaster was one of the worst in Great Lakes history. It is a tale of intrigue, heroism, and politics. Beneath the Great Lakes lie an historic treasure trove, an underwater museum, and a graveyard telling the story of 19th century shipping, *The Lady Elgin*. Presented by Bob Gadbois, Underwater Archaeological Society of Chicago. (Sponsored by the Milwaukee Civil War Round Table and Iron Brigade Association.)

Brass, Woodwinds and Percussion: A Day of Civil War-Era Instruments

Saturday, November 19, 2011

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Civil War Museum's Freedom Hall

See Heritage Military Music Foundation's collection of 19th century band instruments that includes 40 antique brass, woodwind and percussion instruments. Pick up, examine and even play many of the instruments. Watch members of the 1st Brigade Band demonstrate instruments and answer questions. Special presentations at 1:00 and 2:30 pm.



At left, Br. Jeff Lesar kept a steady beat on the drum to keep our unit in step during the St. Francis Days parade.

(additional photos on page 4)



CIVIL WAR UNIFORMS BY PCC PATRICK FALLON



September's Patriotic Instruction was done by PCC Patrick Fallon. In his informative discussion about the various types of uniforms, he showed pictures of units wearing an array of different uniforms and equipment.

Members of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War are not required to have or wear a uniform of the period. However, those of us who are SVR members are required by those regulations to dress and comport ourselves in the manner of the soldiers and sailors of the Civil War era. While this does not mean we need to become re-enactors, it also does not mean that we can't learn from their research. One of the interesting areas of study is the differences between what the regulations stated for their uniforms to be like and what those independent minded volunteers actually wore. Although this was sometimes driven by supply issues, more often it was controlled by comfort and practicality.

Consider the kepi for instance. While prescribed for and issued to the enlisted men, many soldiers, particularly those in the western armies preferred to wear a broad brimmed hat, either of civilian manufacture or an untrimmed Hardee hat without the brim looped up. Their reasoning for this was that the broad brim of a slouch or Hardee hat protected their ears and the back of their necks from sun, rain or snow better.

The regulation issued shirt made of Domet flannel has been compared to wearing sandpaper. I personally know people who have had their skin rubbed raw wearing reproductions of that shirt. This is why in most images where you can see the details of their shirts you will see that they are usually wearing civilian shirts. In fact, requests for clothing from home were a close second to food in many soldiers' letters home.

Another interesting point is the so-called "military" vest. Vests were not issued to the troops. All vests were private purchase items for both enlisted men and officers. The military vest was styled to look like an issue item so it would give that proper martial dash to the wearer.

When I am asked to give advice regarding what uniform items to purchase I first ask where that person's ancestor served and in what branch, infantry, cavalry or artillery they were in. I then tell the person to look for photographs taken in camp of other soldiers in that area around the same time. Carefully study those images and take notes of the details of their uniforms and accoutrements. What type of hats were most of them wearing? Was the breastplate on their cartridge box sling still centered on their chest or had they moved it so that it sat at their shoulder or removed it altogether? Were their trouser cuffs rolled up or hemmed to their proper length?

By looking for and finding the most common details you can then purchase items to recreate that look. If however you have an image or images of your ancestor, study those for the same details and make your purchases accordingly. It all boils down to spending some time to research the life of the average soldier of the era.

C.K. PIER BADGER CAMP # 1

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR: SVC BRIAN McMANUS

MEMBER'S BIRTHDAYS IN OCTOBER:

Congratulations to:

1-Carl Liebert



CAMP CALENDAR

1-2 October	Trimborn Farms living history weekend
5 October	Camp 1 and Auxiliary Meeting, 7 p.m., Milwaukee Soldiers Home, Building 1
9 October	Rufus King Plaque Dedication, 1:30 p.m., Mason & Van Buren Sts., Milwaukee
15 October	DUVCW Tent Installation—LaFayette Church, 1 p.m., Hwy. ES, East Troy / Elkhorn
2 November	Camp 1 and Auxiliary Meeting 7 p.m., Bldg. 1
6 November	Dept. Leadership Conference, 12:30-4:30 p.m., Milwaukee VA Soldiers Home Bldg. 1

CIVIL WAR TRIVIA

Q. Who wrote the "Battle Hymn of the Republic?"

A: Julia Ward Howe, first published in The Atlantic Monthly in Feb. 1862.

- Camp and Auxiliary Photo Album -



On Sept. 11, Camp members staffed several tables at the Oak Creek Historical Society Fall Festival. *Below*, PCC Bill Doan shows his Spencer rifle and ancestor's Medal of Honor to visitors. In the background, Br. Pat Kulas laid out a large collection of Civil War artifacts. Additionally, Br. Tom Mueller and CC Dave Howard took turns telling spectators about our Order.



Photos at left: Camp 1 and Auxiliary 4 in the St. Francis Days parade. PNP Danielle Michaels, DC Tom Brown and Sr. Denise Oman in the front rank. *Below left*, PC-in-C Steve Michaels and Camp 1 Chaplain Dean Collins accompany Br. Dan Palama (Camp 4) dressed in grey? Yes, up to the first battle of Bull Run (Manassas), Union soldiers, and some Wisconsin units wore grey uniforms.



HISTORICAL MARKER DEDICATION

GENERAL RUFUS KING

Statesman, Soldier, Editor, Educator

**Sunday, October 9, 2011
1:30 p.m.**

**Dedication ceremony at
East Mason and North Van Buren Streets
in downtown Milwaukee**

Conducted by the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War
and Auxiliary to the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

Co-sponsored by the Milwaukee County Historical Society

Featuring a Civil War musket salute to Gen. King



*In the mid-1800's
the Rufus King
home lent the
intersection of
Mason and Van
Buren Streets the
name "King's
Corner."*

